

To The Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Horncastle.

GENTLEMEN,

The following is my REPORT ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITARY CONDITION OF HORNCASTLE during 1905 :

Some months ago I had occasion to write your Council in regard to the revision of our Bye-laws, as I consider our present ones, in many cases, quite out of date.

We have gone over the New Model Bye-laws of the Local Government Board with your Clerk, which he has placed, or will place, in your hands for approval. I hope this may be done at an early date, as there are several minor Sanitary matters which require rectifying, and the New Bye-laws would be of great assistance to us in having them done.

It is not my desire or intention to push Sanitary improvements to such an extent as might prove a serious inconvenience to any one, but I am especially anxious that all places used for the collection and storage of food for public consumption, as well as the collection and removal of filth, manure, etc., should be better supervised; and also the abolishing of old and unsanitary systems of Closets.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The number of cases notified under the Infectious Diseases Notification Act, 1889, totalled twenty-nine, made up as follows:—Twenty-four of Scarlet Fever, two of Enteric Fever, two of Erysipelas, and one of Diphtheria.

The outbreak of Scarlet Fever commenced in the middle of January and continued till the end of May, and with three exceptions, it was wholly confined to Foundry Street and Albert Street. Amongst the earliest cases were three in one house in a crowded part of Albert Street, and in order to try to stop the outbreak we removed the whole family to the Isolation Hospital, where three more of the family sickened with the disease in a few days. Unfortunately, however, we were not so successful on this occasion in stopping the epidemic, as the infection had been carried to the Wesleyan Day Schools, and spread rapidly.

As Measles (which is not notifiable) was also prevalent in the School at the same time, I found it advisable to close the Infant Department from February 15th till February 27th, 1905.

I regret to say that we did not receive that support from the parents of those suffering from this disease which we ought to have had. In two instances I saw children playing in the public streets during the period of desquamation, which occurs after Scarlet Fever, and when the disease is still infectious; this was probably allowed through ignorance or carelessness, but it is a difficult matter to keep children within doors when they feel well, and it was these considerations which deterred me prosecuting before the Magistrates.

I shall not again dwell on the necessity for a proper Infectious Diseases Isolation Hospital.

The two cases of Enteric Fever were both imported, as they were strangers to the district; and the case of Diphtheria was also imported.

I am pleased to report that no deaths occurred from any of those Infectious or Contagious Diseases.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT, 1901.

We have visited, at different times, a number of the Workshops and Workplaces under the above Act, and have found everything satisfactory.

The two Underground Bakehouses are regularly limewashed and are kept in satisfactory conditions.

STATISTICS.

The population of the whole Urban District has been calculated at 3906; and that population—less those in the Workhouse not belonging to the District has been calculated at 3859.

The deaths registered as belonging to the Urban District number 56, which gives a death-rate equal to 14·5 per 1000.

For the last five years, that is since the last census, the numbers of deaths and percentages are as follows :—

| | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 |
|----------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Deaths | 54 | 72 | 85 | 60 | 56 |
| per 1000 | 13·5 | 17·9 | 21·6 | 15·4 | 14·5 |

During 1905 out of the 56 deaths registered, 30 were in persons over 65 years of age.

Including the Workhouse, the total deaths recorded number 69, which gives a death-rate equal to 17·9 per 1000.

Of the 17 deaths in the Workhouse, leaving out that of an infant aged 14 days, the average age was 74 years.

Seven deaths were registered under one year, which is equal to an Infant Mortality of 106·1 per 1000 births.

The Infant Mortality for the last five years is as follows :—

| | 1901 | 1902 | 1903 | 1904 | 1905 |
|------------------|------|------|-------|------|-------|
| Deaths | 6 | 11 | 14 | 10 | 7 |
| per 1000 births. | 68·9 | 125· | 194·4 | 119· | 106·1 |

66 births were registered, which is equal to a birth-rate of 17 per 1000.

The principal causes of death have been Bronchitis and Pneumonia, 10 ; Heart Diseases, 6 ; and Tubercular Diseases, 4 ; but with a large number classified as being due to Old Age.

Further particulars will be found in the tables annexed.

To Mr. H. R. Maynard, The Pharmacy, Horncastle, I am indebted for the following returns as to the Rainfall :—

Total Rainfall for 1905—21·63 inches.

Average for the last five years—24·53 inches.

Rain fell on 177 days during the year, 1905 ; the greatest fall during 24 hours was 0·97 inch on June 17th.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

ROBT. McLAY, M.D.,

M.O.H., Horncastle Urban District.

24, East Street,

Horncastle,

6th February, 1906.

